

CHAPTER 3

Regime of the Lacedaemonians

≈ CHAPTER 1 ≈

(1) But once when reflecting that Sparta, though it is among the cities with the smallest populations, appeared the most powerful as well as renowned in Hellas, I wondered how in the world this came to be.¹ When I reflected fully on the practices of the Spartans,² however, I wondered no longer. (2) Indeed, Lycurgus, who set down their laws,³ in obedience to which they were happy⁴—I wonder at him too and regard him as wise in the extreme.⁵ For not by imitating the other cities, but even by conceiving things that are opposed to most of them, he showed the fatherland to be outstanding in happiness.

(3) Concerning, to start with, the begetting of children (so that I may begin at the beginning): when it comes to providing nourishment to girls who are going to bear children and are held to be nobly educated, the others provide as measured an amount of basic food as is practicable and as little meat as possible. With respect to wine, furthermore, they make the girls either abstain from it entirely or take it much watered-down. And just as the majority of those who engage in the arts are sedentary, so too the rest of the Greeks deem it right that the girls sit quietly and work wool. Now then, how could one expect those reared in this way to produce any impressive offspring? (4) By contrast, Lycurgus held that female slaves are quite adequate for supplying clothes, whereas, because he believed⁶ that for free females the greatest task is the begetting of children, he first prescribed that the female sex⁷ exercise the body no less than the

male does. Next, just as he did for the men, he created running and strength contests also among the females, since he believed that more robust offspring come from parents who are both strong.

(5) And as to when a woman goes to a man [in marriage], seeing that others in the first part of the time would have intercourse with their wives without measure, Lycurgus conceived the opposite as regards this too. For he set it down as immodest⁸ for the man to be seen coming [to her bedroom] and immodest for him to be seen leaving. Thus, the couple would necessarily have greater longing for intercourse with one another, and the one born would be more robust, if any should be engendered in this way,⁹ rather than if the couple should be sated with one another. (6) But in addition to these things, he also stopped each of them from taking a wife whenever he wished, and prescribed that marriages be made when they are at their bodily prime, for he believed this too to be advantageous to fertility. (7) If it nonetheless should happen that an old man possessed a young wife, and seeing that men of such an age especially keep guard over their wives, he legislated the opposite as regards this too. For he made it such that an older man could bring in, to produce children for himself, whichever man whose body as well as soul he might admire. (8) And if, in turn, someone should not wish to live in wedlock with a woman, but should desire noteworthy children, Lycurgus also made it lawful that the fellow may beget children with whichever woman he might see who had fine offspring and was well bred, if he persuades the man who possesses her. (9) And indeed Lycurgus made many concessions of this sort. For the women wish to control two households, and the men to acquire for their children brothers who share in kinship and power but do not lay claim to their property.

(10) Let anyone who wishes, then, investigate whether, by his thus conceiving things opposite to those done by others regarding the begetting of children, Lycurgus perfected men in Sparta as excelling in both size and strength.

≈ CHAPTER 2 ≈

(1) I, however, having already discussed the question of generation, wish to make clear also the education of each.¹⁰ So then, as

regards those of the other Greeks who profess to educate their sons most nobly: as soon as the children¹¹ understand what is said to them, they immediately assign pedagogues¹² as attendants over them and immediately send them to teachers to learn letters, music, and the exercises of the wrestling school. In addition to these things, they make their children's feet tender with sandals and pamper their bodies with changes of cloaks; as for their food, furthermore, they believe the measure of how much they may eat to be the size of their paunch. (2) But Lycurgus, instead of having each privately assign slaves as pedagogues, assigned a man from among those who hold the greatest offices to preside over the children; and he gave this man, who is in fact called a *paidonomos*,¹³ authority both to assemble the children and, upon inspection, to chastise severely anyone who might be taking it easy. Lycurgus also gave him whip bearers from among the young men so that they could mete out punishment whenever it should be needed, with the result that there prevails among them at the same time much modesty,¹⁴ on the one hand, and much obedience, on the other. (3) Furthermore, instead of softening their feet with sandals, he prescribed that they harden them by going barefoot, for he believed that if they should exercise in this way, they would climb uphill more easily and be steadier going downhill, and that they would be quicker in leaping, springing, and running if they should have exercised barefoot than would those who wear shoes. (4) And instead of pampering them with cloaks, he legislated that they should become accustomed to a single cloak through the year, for he believed that in this way they should be better prepared against the cold and the heat. (5) Regarding food, he prescribed that a male¹⁵ contribute to the common mess such an amount that he would never be weighed down by surfeit nor be without experience of want. For he believed that those who were educated in this way would be better able, if the need should arise, to toil while going without food, and, if commanded, would better endure on the same food for a longer time, and that they would be less in need of meat and more accommodating with respect to all food, and they would go through life in a healthier state. And he held that the nourishment that makes bodies slender would be more conducive to growth in height than one that fattens them up with food. (6) Yet, so that they would not, in turn, be very much oppressed by hunger, while he did

not permit them to take whatever else they needed without trouble, he did allow them to steal that which would alleviate their hunger. (7) And that it is not because he was at a loss¹⁶ regarding what to allot them that he permitted them to procure food through craftiness—no one, I suppose, is ignorant of this. But it is clear that one who is going to steal must both lie awake at night and, by day, use deceit and wait in ambush, and that one who is going to capture something must prepare spies. Regarding all these things, it is therefore surely clear that he educated the children in this manner because he wished to make them craftier in procuring provisions and more skillful in war.

(8) But, someone might say, if indeed he believed stealing to be a good thing, why then inflict many lashes on anyone who was caught? Because, I contend, as with all the other things human beings teach, they chastise the one who does not perform his service nobly, so [the Spartans] punish those who are caught on the grounds that they steal badly.¹⁷ (9) And indeed, although he set it down as a noble thing to snatch away as many cheeses as possible from Orthia,¹⁸ he ordered others to whip those who did so, because he wished to make clear also in this case that by enduring bodily pain for a short time, one is able to rejoice in a good reputation for a long time. It is clear in this case, too, that whenever swiftness is needed, the sluggard benefits himself the least and obtains the most troubles.

(10) And so that the children would never be in want of a ruler even if the *paidonomos* should go away, he gave whoever of the citizens was present authority both to order whatever might seem to be good for the children and to chastise someone if he should miss the mark. By doing this, he made the children also more modest, for nothing makes either men or children so modest as rulers do. (11) And in fact so that the children would not be in want of a ruler if it should ever happen that no man was present, he set down that the keenest one of the males¹⁹ of each band²⁰ rule. The result is that the children there are at no time in want of a ruler.

(12) But it seems that I must speak also of pederasty.²¹ For this too pertains in some way to education. So then, the other Greeks are either like the Boeotians, among whom a man and boy are paired off as a couple, or like the Eleans, who enjoy the boy in the bloom of youth in return for favors; but there are also some who absolutely prevent the lovers even from conversing with the boys.²² (13) But

Lycurgus conceived also the opposite of all these things: if someone who was himself as he ought to be, and, admiring the soul of a boy, should endeavor to perfect him as a friend beyond reproach and to consort with him, Lycurgus praised this and believed it to be the noblest education. But if someone should be manifestly seeking after the body of a boy, Lycurgus established this as most shameful and in Lacedaemon made it so that lovers stay away from boys no less than parents from children and siblings from siblings when it comes to sexual relations. (14) To be sure, I do not wonder that this is distrusted by some; for in many cities, the laws do not set themselves against the desires directed toward boys.

So then, the education both of the Laconians and of the other Greeks has been spoken of. As for which of the two renders men more obedient, more modest, and more continent with respect to their needs, let he who wishes to do so investigate these things also.

≈ CHAPTER 3 ≈

(1) Now, when they move from being children into puberty, at that age others release them from pedagogues and release them from teachers, and no one further rules over them; rather, they are let loose to live by their own law. But Lycurgus conceived the opposite of these things too. (2) For, observing that a great spiritedness is naturally implanted in those of such an age, hubris is especially uppermost, and the strongest desires for pleasures take hold of them, he laid upon those at that age the most toils and contrived for them the greatest lack of leisure. (3) But since he also further imposed the penalty that if someone should flee these difficulties, he would obtain nothing of the noble things,²³ he made it so that not only those holding public office, but also those in charge of²⁴ each [youth] take care that they not become altogether disreputable in the city on the grounds of cowardly shirking. (4) In addition to these things, because he wished to implant in them a strong sense of modesty, he ordered that even in the streets, they keep both hands inside their cloak, walk along in silence, and not look about here and there but keep their gaze on what is before their feet. Here too, indeed, it became clear

that the male sex is stronger also at being moderate than is the female nature. (5) At any rate, you would hear a sound less from them than from stone statues; you would less turn their eyes than you would those of bronze statues; and you would hold them to be more modest than even maidens in their bridal chambers.²⁵ And whenever they come to the common mess,²⁶ you must be content to hear them only when they are asked something.

And of the beloved boys²⁷ then, Lycurgus took care in this manner.

≈ CHAPTER 4 ≈

(1) About the young men, he was indeed the most serious by far, because he believed that, if they should become such as they ought to be, they would have the greatest influence on the city's good. (2) So, seeing that among those in whom the love of victory is most ingrained, their choruses are most worth hearing and gymnastic contests most worth seeing, he believed that if he set the young men contending in rivalry against one another concerning virtue,²⁸ then they would attain manly goodness²⁹ to the greatest degree. So I will fully relate how, in turn, he set these to contending with one another. (3) Accordingly, the ephors³⁰ choose three men from those in the prime of life, and these are called *hippagretai*.³¹ And each of these enlists a hundred men, making clear on what account he honors some and rejects others. (4) Those, then, who do not obtain the noble things are at war both with those who dismissed them and with those who were chosen instead of them, and they watch one another closely, if they should take it easy, contrary to any of the things deemed noble. (5) And this in fact is the rivalry dearest to the gods and most befitting a citizen, in which is displayed what a good man must do. But each exercises separately as well, in order that they will always be at their strongest, and, if there be any need to do so, will individually give aid to the city with all their strength.³² (6) And it is also necessary that they take care to be in good condition, for indeed, because of their rivalry, they spar whenever they encounter one another. To be sure, any bystander has authority to separate the combatants. And if someone disobeys the one separating them,

the *paidonomos* leads him up to the ephors; and they punish him severely, wishing to impress on him that passion must never gain mastery over obedience to the laws.

(7) As for those who have passed from the age of young men and are now to hold the greatest offices: the other Greeks relieve them from focusing their attention on their physical strength, though they still order them to serve on campaign. Lycurgus, by contrast, made it customary that hunting is noblest for people of that age, unless some public office should prevent them, so that these too, no less than the young men, would be able to bear the toils of campaigning.

≈ CHAPTER 5 ≈

(1) So then, the practices that Lycurgus legislated for each age have nearly been stated; and now I will try to go through also the mode of life³³ he arranged for everyone. (2) So then, Lycurgus found the Spartans taking their meals at home, just as the other Greeks did, and, recognizing that a great deal of easy living occurs in homes, he brought the messes out into the open, because he held that in this way his commands would be least transgressed. (3) As for food, he prescribed a diet such that they were left neither gorged nor wanting. Still, many unreckoned extras also come from what has been caught in the hunt, and sometimes in exchange for these, the wealthy contribute wheat bread,³⁴ so that then, until they separately retire, the table is neither devoid of things to eat nor extravagant. (4) And further, stopping the unnecessary drinking, which trips up bodies and trips up judgment, he permitted each to drink whenever thirsty, for he believed that drink thus becomes most harmless as well as most pleasant. So indeed, by participating in the common mess in this way, how would anyone utterly destroy himself or his household by gluttony or drunkenness?

(5) In addition, in the other cities, people mostly consort with others of the same age, and among these separate cohorts modesty least prevails. But Lycurgus mingled [the age cohorts] in Sparta [since] in most things the young are educated by the experience of the old.³⁵

(6) It is also local custom in the common messes to speak of anything

noble that someone does in the city. In that place, consequently, there is ingrained the least hubris, the least drunken behavior, and the least shameful conduct or shameful speech. (7) Eating outside, furthermore, brings about the following good things: they are compelled to walk on their return homeward and so have to take care not to be tripped up by wine, since they know that they will not remain where they dined and must find their way by night just as by day. For one still liable to military service is not allowed to proceed by torchlight.

(8) Furthermore, since Lycurgus also observed that those who toil hard after taking their food have a good complexion, firm flesh, and strength, whereas those who do not toil appear puffy, ugly, and weak, he did not neglect even this. Rather, reflecting that even when someone himself, through his own willing love of toil, appears to have an adequate body, Lycurgus ordered the elder in each gymnasium still always to take care so that [their labors] never be less than the food apportioned to them.³⁶ (9) And to me it seems that Lycurgus was not tripped up in this. In fact, one would not easily find either healthier or more able-bodied people than the Spartans: for they train similarly with their legs, arms, and neck.

≈ CHAPTER 6 ≈

(1) Furthermore, he conceived opposite things to what most do also in the following matters. For in the other cities, each man rules over his own children, household slaves, and property; but because Lycurgus wished to arrange it such that citizens should enjoy some good from one another, while in no way doing harm, he made it so that each man rule alike over his own children and those of others. (2) And whenever someone knows that these [other men] are the fathers of the children over whom he rules, he necessarily rules their children in the way he would wish his own to be ruled. And if any child ever receives lashes from someone else and reports this to his father, it is shameful for the father not to inflict additional lashes on his son. In this way, they trust one another not to give any shameful order to the children.

(3) And with respect to household slaves, too, he made it so that, if someone should have need of them, he could also make use of those that belong to others. He introduced the sharing of hunting dogs as well, so that while those who have need of them call for the hunt, one who is not himself at leisure to go sends the dogs out with pleasure. And horses, too, he made use of in like manner. For whoever is sick or in need of transport or wishing to reach somewhere swiftly, if he should see a horse anywhere, he takes it and after making fine use of it, returns it.³⁷ (4) Nor yet again did he make a practice of what is customary, at least among others. For sometimes those who have returned late from the hunt may have need of provisions, if they happen not to have prepared them for themselves. In this case, then, he established that those who have finished up³⁸ should leave what had been prepared, and those who are in need should open the seals and, taking as much as they may need, leave the rest resealed.

(5) Accordingly, by their sharing in this way with one another, even those of small means partake of all the things in the land, whenever they may have need of anything.

≈ CHAPTER 7 ≈

(1) Furthermore, Lycurgus established in Sparta also the following customs opposite to those of the other Greeks. For presumably in the other cities, all engage in moneymaking as much as they are able: one is a farmer, another a shipowner, another a merchant, and still others support themselves from the arts. (2) But in Sparta, Lycurgus prohibited free men from engaging in anything connected with moneymaking; rather, he prescribed that they believe their only works to be those that secure freedom for cities. (3) And further, why need wealth be seriously sought after in a place where, by prescribing that they contribute equally to the provisions and lead a similar way of life, he made it so that they do not grasp after money for the sake of luxurious pleasure? But not even for cloaks need they engage in moneymaking, for they are adorned not by expensive clothing, but by the good condition of the body. (4) Nor even for the sake of being able to spend on their messmates need they amass money, for

he made it more reputable to benefit one's intimates through bodily toil than by spending money on them, pointing out that the former is a work of the soul, and the latter, a work of wealth. (5) Furthermore, he hindered their making money by unjust means also in ways such as these: First, he established a sort of currency such that if a sum worth only ten minae should come into a household, it could never escape the notice of either the masters or the household slaves, for it would require both a great amount of space and a wagon for hauling. (6) Moreover, there is a search for gold and silver, and if any appears somewhere, its possessor is punished.

Why, therefore, would anyone be serious about moneymaking in a place where its acquisition brings more pains than its use yields good cheer?

≈ CHAPTER 8 ≈

(1) But really, we all know that in Sparta most of all, they obey the rulers as well as the laws. I, however, suppose that Lycurgus did not first attempt to establish this good condition³⁹ until he made it so that the strongest⁴⁰ persons in the city were of the same mind. (2) I take as evidence these things: In the other cities, the more powerful do not wish even to seem to fear the rulers, but believe this to be servile.⁴¹ In Sparta, by contrast, the strongest both defer most of all to the rulers and take great pride in being submissive and in answering whenever they are called, running, not walking; for they believe that if they themselves take the lead in zealously obeying, so too others will follow. And this very thing has come about.

(3) It is also likely that these same people helped to establish the power of the ephorate,⁴² since indeed they understood obedience to be the greatest good in the city and in the army as well as in the household: so much greater the power that the ruling office possesses, so much the more, they held, will it also terrify the citizens into submission.⁴³ (4) The ephors, accordingly, are competent to punish whomever they wish and have authority to accomplish this on the spot; and in fact, they have authority to terminate rulers in the midst of their office and even to imprison them and to place them on

trial for their life.⁴⁴ In possessing so much power, they do not permit, as do the other cities, that those elected rule however they wish continuously through the year, but, just like tyrants and officiators at gymnastic contests, if they perceive anyone breaking the law in any way, they immediately chastise him on the spot.

(5) While there are also many other noble contrivances by Lycurgus with a view to the citizens' willing obedience to the laws, among the noblest also seems to me to be this: that he did not deliver his laws to the populace until, going with the strongest citizens to Delphi, he asked the god whether it would be more desirable and better for Sparta to obey the laws he set down. And when the god replied that it would be better in every way, then Lycurgus delivered them, establishing that disobedience to laws sanctioned by the Pythia is not only illegal but also impious.⁴⁵

∞ CHAPTER 9 ∞

(1) And the following, too, is worthy of being admired in Lycurgus: that he prevailed in the city in making a noble death preferred to a shameful life; and in fact, should someone investigate this, he would find that fewer of these die than do those who choose to retreat out of fear. (2) To speak truly, safety even follows upon virtue more of the time than upon vice,⁴⁶ for indeed virtue is easier, more pleasant, more resourceful, and stronger. It is clear too that glory most often follows upon virtue; for in fact, all men wish to fight in some way alongside those who are good.

(3) Indeed, the way that he contrived to bring these things about—this too, it is noble not to omit. Accordingly, he plainly prepared happiness for the good [courageous], on the one hand, and unhappiness for the bad [cowards], on the other hand. (4) For in other cities, whenever someone proves to be a coward, he possesses only the reputation of cowardice; and if he wishes, the coward goes to the market and sits and trains in the same place as the courageous man; but in Lacedaemon, every one would be ashamed to accept a coward as a messmate or as a training partner in the wrestling bouts. (5) And often, even when they are dividing up teams to play ball, such a man

is left over without a position; and in choruses, he is led away to the positions of disgrace; and further, in the roads, he must give way of his own accord; and he must give up his seat, even for younger persons; and as for his female relations, he must maintain the girls at home, and they must bear the responsibility for his [lack of] manliness;⁴⁷ and he must endure a hearth empty of a wife and at the same time pay the penalty for this; and he must not stroll about anointed, or imitate the blameless, lest he suffer lashes from his betters.

(6) So indeed, given the sort of dishonor laid on those who are cowards, I in no way wonder that death is preferred there instead of a life thus dishonored and disgraced.

≈ CHAPTER 10 ≈

(1) And it seems to me that Lycurgus also nobly legislated how, even as far as old age, virtue should be exercised. For by placing the decision regarding the *gerousia*⁴⁸ toward the end of life, he made it so that not even in old age are nobility and goodness neglected.⁴⁹

(2) Also worthy of admiration is the support he gave to good men in their old age: by establishing that the old have authority over capital trials,⁵⁰ he made old age more honorable than the full vigor of those in their prime. (3) It is fitting, to be sure, that this contest most of all is taken seriously among human beings. For gymnastic contests are also noble, but they have to do with bodies; by contrast, the contest involving the *gerousia* renders a judgment regarding the souls of the good. As much, then, as the soul is better than the body, so much too are the contests that concern souls more worthy of seriousness than those of bodies.

(4) How is not the following greatly worthy of being admired in Lycurgus? Since he observed that wherever those who wish to do so take care for virtue, they are not sufficient to make their fatherlands greater, he compelled everyone in Sparta to exercise all the virtues in public. Just as, then, private individuals differ from one another when it comes to virtue—those who exercise it from those who do not take care for it—so too Sparta fittingly differs from all cities when it comes to virtue, since she alone makes the practice of nobility and

goodness a public affair. (5) For is this not a noble thing: that while the other cities chastise someone if he does some injustice to another, Lycurgus imposed a penalty no less if someone should be manifestly neglecting to be the best possible? (6) For he believed, as it seems, that by those who sell others into slavery or who rob something or steal, only the ones harmed are done injustice; whereas by the bad and unmanly, whole cities are betrayed. Thus, fittingly it seems to me at least, he imposed the greatest penalties on these latter ones. (7) And in fact he imposed an irresistible necessity to exercise the whole of political virtue. For he made the city belong to all those alike who fulfill the customary laws,⁵¹ and he did not take into account deficiency either of body or of money. By contrast, if someone should shirk in cowardly fashion from toiling hard according to the customary laws, he ordained that this one would no longer be deemed to belong to the peers.⁵²

(8) But that these laws are most ancient is clear; for Lycurgus is said to have been born at the time of the *Heracleidai*.⁵³ Yet, although they are thus ancient, to others even now they are most novel; and in fact, the most wonderful thing of all is that while everyone praises such practices, not a single city is willing to imitate them.

≈ CHAPTER 11 ≈

(1) And these are indeed common goods both in peace and in war. But if someone wishes to observe also what Lycurgus contrived for the army, better than others did, it is possible to hear of these things as well. (2) Accordingly, first the ephors publicly proclaim the years in which it is necessary to serve on campaign, both for horsemen and for hoplites, and then for handicraftsmen. Thus, all the things that people use in the city, the Lacedaemonians have in abundance also in the army. And it is commanded that all the equipment the army may need in common is to be supplied, some equipment brought by carts and some by beasts of burden; for in this way, anything left behind might least escape notice. (3) Furthermore, as regards the contest at arms, he contrived the following: that they be equipped with a crimson cloak—for he believed this to share least in common

with feminine dress and to be most warlike—as well as a brass shield, since it is both quick to polish and slow to dirty. And he also permitted long hair to those past the age of the young men, for he believed that in this way they would appear bigger, freer, and more terrible. (4) When they were thus arranged, he divided them into six *morai*,⁵⁴ both horsemen and hoplites. And each of the citizen *morai* has one *polemarchos*, four *lochagoi*, eight *pentēkostēres*, and sixteen *enoōmotarchai*.⁵⁵ And out of these *morai*, they are deployed by word of command into *enoōmotiai*: sometimes by one, sometimes by three, sometimes by six.⁵⁶

(5) But as to that which most people suppose—that the Laconian ordering of arms is convoluted—they assume the opposite of what is really the case. For in the Laconian ordering, the leaders are first in line, and each file has all that needs to be provided. (6) And this ordering is so easy to learn that anyone able to recognize human beings would not err. For it is given to some to lead while others are ordered to follow. Changes in movement are made clear by word from the *enoōmotarchēs*, just as from a herald, [and] the phalanxes become either shallow or deep. None of this is in any way difficult to learn. (7) To be sure, to fight in the same way alongside of whoever happens to be near even when they are thrown into confusion—this ordering is not easy to learn, except for those educated by the laws of Lycurgus. (8) And the Lacedaemonians carry out most easily even those things that seem to be altogether difficult to those practiced in the use of heavy arms. For when they march by column, of course, *enoōmotia* follows behind *enoōmotia*. And if, in such an arrangement, an enemy phalanx should appear in front, word is passed along to the *enoōmotarchēs* to deploy his line in the front on the shield side, and so through all the columns until the phalanx is standing opposite the enemy. Further, if the enemy appears in the back while they are situated thus, each file wheels about, so that the strongest will always face the enemy. (9) But though the leader is on the left, they do not regard themselves as falling short in this, and it is at times even an advantage. For if any of the enemy should attempt to encircle them, they would flank them not on the naked but on the shield side.⁵⁷ Yet if at some time, for some reason, it seems beneficial to have the leader on the right wing, the troop, turning, wheels the phalanx about to that wing, until the leader is on the right, and the

rear becomes the left.⁵⁸ (10) And in turn, if an ordering of the enemy appears on the wing from the right as they are marching, they do nothing other than turn each *lochos* just like a trireme confronting the opponents, and thus again the *lochos* in the rear is on the spear side. Further, if the enemy comes near the left, they do not permit this, but either dash forward or turn the *lochoi* to match the opponents, and thus again the *lochos* in the rear is placed on the shield side.⁵⁹

≈ CHAPTER 12 ≈

(1) I will explain also what Lycurgus legislated as to how a camp needs to be set up. Because the angles of a quadrilateral are useless,⁶⁰ he would set up the camp in a circle, unless there were a mountain or wall as protection, or they should have a river behind them. (2) Furthermore, by day he posted guards, some alongside the weapons, looking inward; for these are put in place not on account of enemies but on account of friends.⁶¹ Against enemies, furthermore, horsemen stand guard in positions from which they may see to the furthest extent whether someone approaches. (3) By night, he legislated, guard was to be kept by the Skiritai in forward positions outside the phalanx (though nowadays also by foreigners . . . any of these being present).⁶² (4) As for their always going about with their spears in hand, one should know well, too, that they do this for the same reason that they also bar the slaves from the weapons. And one need not wonder that when they attend to the [bodily] necessities, they go no further from either the weapons or one another than they must so as not to distress one another. For even these things, they do on account of security. (5) Furthermore, they change camp frequently, both for the sake of harassing their enemies and for the sake of benefiting their friends. As well, it is announced that by law all the Lacedaemonians undertake gymnastic exercise as long as they are serving on campaign, so that they become more magnificent to themselves and appear freer than the others. And neither a walking nor a running course should be made greater than the space covered by the *mora*, in order that no one ends up far from his weapons. (6) After gymnastic exercises, the first *polemarchos* makes the proclamation that they are

to sit down—this is like an inspection—and after this to get their breakfast and quickly relieve the outpost. After this, in turn, there are pastimes and recreations until the evening gymnastic exercises. (7) Further, after these things, the proclamation is made that they are to get their dinner and, whenever they have sung to the gods to whom they have sacrificed with favorable omens, to take their rest upon their weapons.

That I write so much of these things, one ought not to wonder, for one would find that the Lacedaemonians least of all have neglected to take care for any of the things that are needed in military campaigns.

≈ CHAPTER 13 ≈

(1) I will go through also the power and honor that Lycurgus arranged for the king while on campaign.⁶³ First, then, the city provides nourishment for the king, and those with him, while he is on expedition. The *polemarchoi* pitch their tents with him, in order that, always consorting with him, they may also better deliberate in common, if they have any need. In addition, three other men of the peers pitch their tents with him; these latter take care of all the provisions, so that neither the king nor the *polemarchoi* lack the leisure to take care of the affairs of war.

(2) I will go back and take up how the king is sent forth to war together with the army. For first, while at home, he sacrifices to Zeus Agētōr and to the gods with him.⁶⁴ If he sacrifices with fine omens there, then the fire bearer takes the fire from the altar and leads the way to the borders of the country; at that place, the king offers sacrifices again, to Zeus and Athena.⁶⁵ (3) When he sacrifices to both these gods with good omens, then he crosses over the borders of the country. And the fire from these sacrificial offerings, which is never extinguished, leads the way, and all sorts of sacrificial animals follow. Whenever the king sacrifices, he always begins this deed while it is still dark, for he wishes to attract the favorable notice of the god. (4) Present around the sacrifice are the *polemarchoi*, *lochagoi*, *pentēkostēres*, *stratiarchoi* of foreign troops, those who lead the army's

baggage train, and any of the generals (*stratēgoi*) from the cities who wishes to be there. (5) Also present are two of the ephors, who in no way meddle unless the king summons them, yet by seeing what each person does, they moderate them all, as is fitting. When the sacrificial offerings are complete, the king, summoning all, declares what is to be done. The result is that, seeing these things, you would regard the others to be mere improvisers⁶⁶ when it comes to military affairs, and the Lacedaemonians alone the real craftsmen in the affairs of war.

(6) Furthermore, whenever the king takes the lead, provided no opposition appears, no one marches before him except the Skiritai and the horsemen who are scouts. But whenever they suppose that a battle will ensue, then, taking the troop of the first *mora*, the king leads, turning to the spearhand, until he is between two *morai* and two *polemarchoi*.⁶⁷ (7) The eldest of the public officials organizes those who must be stationed alongside of these: the peers who are the king's messmates, the diviners, the physicians, and the aulos players who lead the army, as well as any volunteers who may be present.⁶⁸ The result is that, regarding the things that are needed, there is nothing left unprovided for; for nothing is unforeseen.

(8) And Lycurgus contrived also the following noble and beneficial⁶⁹ things, as it seems to me, with respect to contests at arms. For whenever a she-goat is sacrificed as a victim, the enemy already being in sight, it is a law both that all the aulos players who are present play and that no Lacedaemonian be without a garland; also, it is announced that weapons are to be polished. (9) And even a young man is allowed to go into battle anointed with oil, and to be brightly beaming⁷⁰ and glorious. And they call out the order⁷¹ to the *enoōmotarchēs*, for it cannot be heard across every entire *enoōmotia* by the *enoōmotarchai* on the outside. To take care that it comes out finely is the obligation of the *polemarchos*.

(10) Further, as to when it seems the opportune moment to make camp, indeed the Lycurgus with regard to this is the king,⁷² and, as well, over pointing out where it must be made. Likewise, as to the sending of an embassy, whether to friends or to enemies, this in turn belongs to the king.⁷³ And everyone begins with the king, whenever they wish to do something. (11) If someone arrives who wants justice, the king sends him to the Hellanodikai;⁷⁴ if he is in need of money, to the treasurer; and

if he brings spoils, to those in charge of the spoils. Since things are done in this way, there is no other work for the king on expedition but to be a priest in the affairs that have to do with the gods and a general in the affairs that have to do with human beings.

≈ CHAPTER 14 ≈

(1) But if someone should ask me whether, even now, the laws of Lycurgus seem to me to remain unchanged — this, by Zeus, I would no longer boldly say!⁷⁵ (2) For I know that formerly the Lacedaemonians chose to live with one another at home, possessing means within measure, rather than, by acting as harmosts⁷⁶ in the cities and being flattered, to become utterly corrupted. (3) And I know that before, they were afraid of being seen in the possession of gold; but now there are those who show off their possession of it. (4) I also know that before, there were expulsions of foreigners⁷⁷ and travel abroad was not permitted for this reason: so that the citizens might not take to easy living through the influence of foreigners. But I know that now, those thought to be first among them are seriously intent on never ceasing to act as harmosts over a foreign land. (5) And there was a time when they took care that they would be worthy to lead; but now they would much more exert themselves so as to rule rather than to be worthy of these things. (6) Accordingly, in former times, the Greeks would go to Lacedaemon and beg them to take the lead against those thought to be unjust; but now many are calling on one another to hinder them from ruling again. (7) To be sure, one need not wonder that these reproaches have arisen against them, when they are manifestly obeying neither the god nor the laws of Lycurgus.

≈ CHAPTER 15 ≈

(1) But I wish also to describe what compacts Lycurgus made for the king in relation to the city. For indeed this ruling office alone continues just as it was established in the beginning; whereas the

other regimes one would find changed and still changing even now. (2) For he established that the king should offer all the public sacrifices for the city, on the grounds that he is from the god, and that he lead the army wherever the city should send it. (3) And he granted that the king take the honorary portions from the sacrifices, and he assigned him land in many of the surrounding subject cities—land that is choice enough that he should neither want for means within measure nor be outstanding as regards wealth. (4) And so that the kings⁷⁸ too might take their meals outside, he assigned them a public tent, and he even honored them with a double portion from the meal, not so that they might devour twice as much, but so that they might be able to honor someone if they should wish. (5) And again, he also granted that each of the kings pick out two messmates, who indeed are called Pythioi.⁷⁹ He also granted that each king take a young pig from the brood of every sow, so that he might never lack sacrificial offerings, if he should need to consult with the gods about something. (6) And near his dwelling, a pool supplies an abundance of water—that this, too, is useful for many things, those who are without it well know. And all rise from their seats for the king, except the ephors from the seats of the ephorate. (7) And every month, they make oaths to each other: the ephors on behalf of the city; the king on behalf of himself. The oath for the king is that he will reign in accordance with the established laws of the city; for the city, that if he keeps his oath, it will maintain the kingship undisturbed. (8) These are the honors, then, that have been given to the king at home during his lifetime, none of them greatly surpassing those of private individuals. For he did not wish to infuse the kings with a tyrannical turn of mind or to make the citizens envious of their power. (9) Yet through the honors given to the king who has met his end, the laws of Lycurgus wish to make clear that it is not as human beings, but as heroes that they honor the kings of the Lacedaemonians.⁸⁰